

Somerville Climate Forward  
Community Development Working Group  
June 19, 2018

**Attendance**

- Larry Yu
- Sam Akiha
- Ian Adelman
- Patrick Gladstone
- Hannah Payne, City of Somerville

**Culture of Climate Action**

- Steps are unclear. What will community coalitions do? Will they do the work for the city or will they be self-determined?
- Objective should be to build culture of climate action into everything—every meeting and gathering has a consideration of climate change.
- Good to identify school engagement as a Tier 2 strategy.
- Strategy is like an organizing campaign. Develop leadership and go talk to people. Assess awareness and needs and get them to commit to something. Need to pick the topic to focus on first. Emergency preparedness could be good entry point - extended power outage, heat, cold, etc. run through engagement once at small scale and then expand.
  - Mystic Housing – work with SHA to talk to residents and help them think through their emergency plan.
  - Start with emergency preparedness and then expand. Emergency preparedness is easy to relate to because you can connect it to what you see and feel. Mitigation related acts are harder to feel directly.
  - Could couple with promoting MassSave and energy/ money saving actions.
- Neighborhood cohesion plan – what is this?
- Presenting this strategy: key thing is having clarity that this is primarily a volunteer and community led effort.
- Calling out race is important.
- This will require a lot of effort on an ongoing basis and will take a lot of time to build relationships and trust. Double the timeline.
- Winter Hill has a neighborhood association that could pull this off. If people were doing engagement in conjunction with the City that might help them get over their apprehension to knock on doors.
- Boston Climate Ready Leaders is a good model because it puts onus on volunteers to gather people and communicate with them. Powerpoint from Boston was really helpful.
- Start with convening to train people to prepare them to have the conversations
- If there is a cost to group (food, printing, etc.), can the City cover that? Branded city information carries weight.

- Bring in people who have done something similar from other communities to share their experience.
- City can provide data follow-up. Set up data input system and identify what the follow up is to those people who say they are interested.
- Door to door clean energy sales will make this challenging.
- Performance metrics are too focused on health. Can we measure climate awareness?
  - Number of people who go to presentations or give presentations.
  - Put something in happiness survey?
  - People can make a pledge to do one thing – track how many people make a pledge.

### **Low-Carbon Transportation**

- How much control do we have over bus stops? Covered bus stops would be a good investment and improve quality of life for bus riders and would encourage more ridership.
- Opportunity with GLX coming to take advantage of rerouting buses
- Don't just look at existing ridership to make routing decisions, but consider who could be riding the bus. Culture on bus ridership can be improved.
- Dedicated bus lane – are double buses a possibility to make experience better and more train-like?
- Are there opportunities that the GLX bridge closures create? Use bridge closing to create new pedestrian and bikeways? SomerStreets on Broadway to show that we don't need a 4 lane highway through Winter Hill. Show that it's okay to shrink the streets temporarily.
- Strategy feels like natural extension of what the city has already done.
- Biking is not naturally inclusive even though bikes don't cost a lot to buy. How can we broaden bike ridership? Need to get more people on bikes, not just build bike lanes. Look at Montreal data—lots of investment in infrastructure but low ridership.
  - Bicycle school – can we offer training?
- Good pavement is also key to having people feel comfortable on bikes.

### **Existing Building Strategy**

- Presentation of this strategy is very important.
- Most people who have a good deal on an apartment in Somerville are renting from longtime owner—need to make sure approach doesn't increase costs.
- Landlords will not be excited about this.
- Can we roll out without a fee? Or only charge fee for large buildings?
- Premise of strategy still requires people to take voluntary actions or care about energy costs. Will this achieve enough?
- What are the other benefits of having a rental licensing program? Seems like a huge amount of work for a small increase in energy efficiency. Additional reasons for license could help build support.
- Cost savings is important selling point.

- Don't know how much energy disclosure would impact rental decisions. Are people going to factor energy information into their rental decision?
- Separate out the license from energy disclosure more clearly. License is important to protect tenants in city. Don't make it overly complicated to start.
- Realtors lobby is pushing hard against Baker's energy audit bill – how do you bring them on board?

## **Tier 2**

- PACE
- Mass Save
- Ways to solve split incentive – turnover is too fast for green leases. Long-term tenants in old housing stock where rent is lower. They could work with their landlord on a multi-year agreement.
- Energy costs are huge for businesses and outages cause significant disruption. What can be done to address these challenges?
- How could we reach businesses that rent their property? Opportunity for green leases? Market is different for commercial– more vacant business properties than residential.
  - Tried to get businesses involved in neighborhood associations, but they often have no bandwidth, so you need to go to them.
  - Green business recognition could help bring business along.
- How transformational districts end up being transformed will have a big impact on climate goals.
- Residents are paying for GLX and it's going to Tufts. Could Tufts give T pass to students and employees to encourage bus and T ridership and cut down on traffic & car emissions?